Tuesday

Last night read *Clayhanger* until midnight. I am greatly disappointed by this book and do not yet grasp its value. It is not a very long stream, but a slow-moving creek. It is not hard to fill eight hundred pages this way. Bennett stops off everywhere with no other apparent reason than to prolong his journey. I am still looking for the reason that made him write this book. Yet I go on. Begun my English lessons again.

This morning went out for a half-hour. I feel myself a little less negated by myself. And I have even had occasion to think of *Les Caves* again without disgust or revulsion. Piano-practice and reading of *Clayhanger.*

Em. went to see Uncle Charles; didn't find him in, but spent some time talking with the old maidservant, who tells her that in the beginning she could hardly put up with being constantly upbraided by my aunt; that she then became accustomed to it, having discovered that "at bottom Madame is very good"; then she adds: "If I can only stick it out two years more, then I won't even want to change."

Wednesday, 7 February

If I were to disappear right now, no one could suspect, on the basis of what I have written, the better things I still have to write. What temerity, what assumption of a long life, has allowed me always to keep the most important for the end?! Or, on the contrary, what shyness, what respect for my subject and fear of not yet being worthy of it! . . . Thus I put off *La Porte etroite* from year to year. Whom could I persuade that that book is the twin of *L'Immoraliste* and that the two subjects grew up concurrently in my mind, the excess of one finding a secret permission in the excess of the other and together establishing a balance.

Thursday

I have dropped *Clayhanger (*at the hundred and

twenty-fifth page), the book becoming less and less good as one gets into it. Resumed *Captain Singleton,* which I am now reading with ease.

Gh6on came to lunch yesterday; his conversation revivified me. After an English lesson we went out together.

Read some *Singleton*$_{y}$ and tried to launch again Julius's visit to Lafcadio.[10] This evening I again feel so tired that I have trouble in writing these few lines and do so only through a sense of duty.

New attacks against me in *L'Ind&pendance;* new attacks in *Les Marges* (in three places). What perseverance in hatred!

[10] An important scene in *Les Caves du Vatican (Lafcadio's Adventures).*